

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Claims 79-128 are pending in the subject application. Claims 79, 91, 103, and 116 have been amended herein. All claims currently pending and under consideration in the above-identified application are shown below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-78. (Canceled).

79. (Currently Amended) A method of sharing virtual folder items stored in a file system of an operating system, the method comprising:

storing a plurality of items in a file system of an operating system located on a user's computing device;

storing in the operating system one or more values corresponding to operating system properties for each of the plurality of items stored in the file system;

creating via the operating system a data object corresponding to a virtual folder representing one or more of the plurality of items stored in the file system on the user's computing device, wherein the virtual folder comprises a location-independent view that exposes said one or more items, and further wherein the location-independent view is based on metadata associated with the one or more items;

displaying via the operating system ~~a~~ the data object corresponding to ~~a~~ the virtual folder ~~comprising~~ representing one or more of the plurality of items

stored in the file system, wherein said virtual folder is navigable according to one or more arbitrary parameters independent of said file system;

receiving via the operating system a user request to share one or more of the plurality of items in the file system that are represented by the virtual folder with one or more sharees, wherein sharing the one or more items comprises allowing the one or more sharees direct access to the user's computing device on which the one or more items are stored; and

setting permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items to provide the one or more sharees direct access to said shared virtual folder items stored in the file system on the user's computing device, wherein setting permissions comprises setting an operating system permission property on each of the one or more shared virtual folder items.

80. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, wherein receiving the user request to share one or more of the items in the virtual folder comprises receiving a level of permissions to be assigned to the one or more sharees for the one or more shared virtual folder items.

81. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, wherein setting permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises verifying that an operating system file share exists from which a first shared virtual folder item can be accessed remotely.

82. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 81, wherein if an operating system file share exists, the permissions on the operating system file share are set so as to allow the one or more sharees to access the first shared virtual folder item.

83. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, further comprising determining that the user request corresponds to a protected virtual folder item that cannot be shared with the sharee, and providing a user notification in response to the user request indicating that the protected virtual folder item cannot be shared.

84. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, wherein setting permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises verifying that a firewall on the operating system will allow the one or more sharees to access the one or more shared virtual folder items.

85. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, further comprising recording details of the sharing transaction, including at least one of the shared virtual folder items, the one or more sharees, and a time at which the permissions were set.

86. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, further comprising sending a link to the one or more sharees in response to receiving the user request to share the items in the virtual folder, the link allowing the one or more sharees to access shared virtual folder items from a remote computer.

87. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, further comprising receiving a query at the operating system from one of the sharees and providing to the sharee in response a list of all of the items in the file system that are shared out to the sharee.

88. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, wherein setting permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises setting an operating system permission property on a first item in the file system without setting an operating system permission property on a parent folder of the first item.

89. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, wherein each of the items in the virtual folder has the same value for an operating system property stored in the operating system.

90. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 79, wherein the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises a non-folder non-file item.

91. (Currently Amended) One or more computer readable media storing computer-executable instructions which, when executed on a ~~computer system~~ user's computing device comprising an operating system, perform a method of sharing virtual folder items stored in a file system of the operating system, the method comprising:

storing a plurality of items in a file system of an operating system located on a user's computing device;

storing in the operating system one or more values corresponding to operating system properties for each of the plurality of items stored in the file system;

displaying via the operating system a data object corresponding to a virtual folder representing one or more of the plurality of items stored in the file system ~~comprising one or more of the items stored in the file system, wherein the~~ virtual folder comprises a location-independent view that exposes said one or

more items, and further wherein the location-independent view is based on metadata associated with the one or more items;

receiving via the operating system a user request to share one or more of the items represented by ~~in~~ the virtual folder with one or more sharees; and

setting permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items to provide the one or more sharees access to said one or more shared virtual folder items, wherein setting permissions comprises setting an operating system permission property on each of the one or more shared virtual folder items.

92. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, wherein receiving the user request to share one or more of the items in the virtual folder comprises receiving a level of permissions to be assigned to the one or more sharees for the one or more shared virtual folder items.

93. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, wherein setting permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises verifying that an operating system file share exists from which a first shared virtual folder item can be accessed remotely.

94. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 93, wherein if an operating system file share exists, the permissions on the operating system file share are set so as to allow the one or more sharees to access the first shared virtual folder item.

95. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, the method further comprising determining that the user request corresponds to a protected virtual folder item that cannot be shared with the sharee, and providing a user notification in response to the user request indicating that the protected virtual folder item cannot be shared.

96. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, wherein setting permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises verifying that a firewall on the operating system will allow the one or more sharees to access the one or more shared virtual folder items.

97. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, the method further comprising recording details of the sharing transaction, including at least one of the shared virtual folder items, the one or more sharees, and a time at which the permissions were set.

98. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, the method further comprising further comprising sending a link to the one or more sharees in response to receiving the user request to share the items in the virtual folder, the link allowing the one or more sharees to access shared virtual folder items from a remote computer.

99. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, the method further comprising receiving a query at the operating system from one of the sharees and providing to the sharee in response a list of all of the items in the file system that are shared out to the sharee.

100. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, wherein setting permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises setting an operating system permission property on a first item in the file system without setting an operating system permission property on a parent folder of the first item.

101. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, wherein each of the items in the virtual folder has the same value for an operating system property stored in the operating system.

102. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 91, wherein the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises a non-folder non-file item.

103. (Currently Amended) A method of sharing virtual folder items stored in a file system of an operating system, the method comprising:

storing a plurality of items in a file system of an operating system located on a user's computing device;

identifying a virtual folder ~~comprising~~ representing one or more of the plurality of items stored in the file system;

receiving at the operating system a request to share one or more of the items ~~in~~ represented by the virtual folder with one or more sharees, wherein sharing the one or more items comprises allowing the one or more sharees direct access to the user's computing device on which the one or more items are stored;

and

in response to the sharing request, setting by the operating system user-access permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items in the file

system, the user-access permissions designating permission levels for the one or more sharees on the one or more shared virtual folder items.

104. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, wherein setting the user-access permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises setting an operating system property on each of the shared virtual folder items in the file system.

105. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, wherein the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises a first item stored in a first physical folder in the file system and a second item stored in a different second physical folder in the file system.

106. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 103, wherein setting the operating system user-access permissions comprises granting a sharee access to a first item stored in a first physical folder in the file system, wherein the sharee is not granted access to a second item in the first physical folder that is not ~~in~~ represented by the virtual folder.

107. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 103, wherein each of the items ~~in~~ represented by the virtual folder has the same value for an operating system property stored in the operating system.

108. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, wherein setting the operating system user-access permissions comprises verifying that one or more operating system file shares exist from which the one or more shared virtual folder items can be accessed remotely.



109. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 108, further comprising determining that one or more operating system file shares exist, and setting permissions on the one or more operating system file shares to allow the one or more sharees to access the shared virtual folder items.

110. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, wherein setting the operating system user-access permissions comprises verifying that a firewall on the operating system will allow the one or more sharees to access the one or more shared virtual folder items.

111. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, further comprising recording details of the sharing transaction, including at least one of the shared virtual folder items, the one or more sharees, and a time at which the permissions were set.

112. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 103, further comprising sending a link to the one or more sharees in response to receiving the request to share the items ~~in~~ represented by the virtual folder, the link allowing the one or more sharees to access shared virtual folder items from a remote computer.

113. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, further comprising receiving a query at the operating system from one of the sharees and providing to the sharee in response a list of all of the items in the file system that are shared out to the sharee.

114. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, wherein setting the operating system user-access permissions comprises setting an operating system permission property on a first virtual folder item in the file system without setting an operating system permission property on a parent folder of the first virtual folder item.

115. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, wherein the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises a non-folder non-file item.

116. (Currently Amended) One or more computer readable media storing computer-executable instructions which, when executed on a ~~computer system~~ computing device comprising an operating system, perform a method of sharing virtual folder items stored in a file system of the operating system, the method comprising:

storing a plurality of items in a file system of an operating system located on a user's computing device;

identifying a virtual folder comprising one or more of the items stored in the file system;

receiving at the operating system a request to share one or more of the items in the virtual folder with one or more sharees; and

in response to the sharing request, setting by the operating system user-access permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items in the file system, the user-access permissions designating permission levels for the one or more sharees on the one or more shared virtual folder items.

117. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, wherein setting the user-access permissions on the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises setting an operating system property on each of the shared virtual folder items in the file system.

118. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, wherein the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises a first item stored in a first physical folder in the file system and a second item stored in a different second physical folder in the file system.

119. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, wherein setting the operating system user-access permissions comprises granting a sharee access to a first item stored in a first physical folder in the file system, wherein the sharee is not granted access to a second item in the first physical folder that is not in the virtual folder.

120. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, wherein each of the items in the virtual folder has the same value for an operating system property stored in the operating system.

121. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, wherein setting the operating system user-access permissions comprises verifying that one or more operating system file shares exist from which the one or more shared virtual folder items can be accessed remotely.

122. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 121, further comprising determining that one or more operating system file shares exist, and setting permissions on the one or more operating system file shares to allow the one or more sharees to access the shared virtual folder items.

123. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, wherein setting the operating system user-access permissions comprises verifying that a firewall on the operating system will allow the one or more sharees to access the one or more shared virtual folder items.

124. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, further comprising recording details of the sharing transaction, including at least one of the shared virtual folder items, the one or more sharees, and a time at which the permissions were set.

125. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, further comprising sending a link to the one or more sharees in response to receiving the request to share the items in the virtual folder, the link allowing the one or more sharees to access shared virtual folder items from a remote computer.

126. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, further comprising receiving a query at the operating system from one of the sharees and providing to the sharee in response a list of all of the items in the file system that are shared out to the sharee.

127. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, wherein setting the operating system user-access permissions comprises setting an operating system permission property on a first virtual folder item in the file system without setting an operating system permission property on a parent folder of the first virtual folder item.

128. (Previously Presented) The computer readable media of claim 116, wherein the one or more shared virtual folder items comprises a non-folder non-file item.